



NATIONAL REPORT ON HUMAN EXPOSURE TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHEMICALS

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM?

Limited information exists about which chemicals people are actually exposed to, how much of these chemicals gets into people's bodies, and what effects these exposures have on people's health. Without this information, public health officials can not effectively identify and prevent diseases that result from environmental exposures.

WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

CDC publishes the *National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals* to provide information about the U.S. population's exposure to environmental chemicals (e.g., metals, pesticides, dioxins, furans, and volatile organic compounds). The first *Report*, which was published in March 2001, provided data on 27 environmental chemicals, 24 of which were measured in the general U.S. population for the first time. The second *Report*, published in January 2003, provided data on 116 chemicals, including the 27 in the first *Report*.

- The overall purpose of the *Report* is to provide unique exposure information to scientists, physicians, and health officials to help prevent disease that results from exposure to environmental chemicals.
- Specific uses of the *Report* are to a) determine which environmental chemicals are getting into the bodies of Americans and at what levels, b) measure the prevalence of people in the U.S. population who have elevated levels of a chemical with a known toxicity level, c) assess the effectiveness of public health efforts to reduce Americans' exposure to specific environmental chemicals, d) track trends over time in levels of exposure, e) determine whether certain groups of people have higher levels of exposure than others, and f) set priorities for research on the human health effects of environmental chemicals.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

The *Report* will be updated every two years with new data for the general population. Current plans are to continue to increase the number of chemicals measured for future *Reports*. Data from these *Reports* will help us answer questions about whether (1) exposure levels are increasing or decreasing over time, (2) public health efforts to reduce exposure are working, and (3) certain groups have higher levels of exposure than others.

For information about this or other CDC programs, visit www.cdc.gov/programs.

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